

Jump Start to Research: Proposal Preparation

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You start by identifying a problem and seeing how others have solved a similar problem.		Cues and Guidance
I: Area of Focus		In what are you interested?
In my position as ...		Identify your professional position, such as college lecturer, administrator, counselor.
I have noticed that ...		Identify your educational concern/problem/issue regarding teaching and/or learning. Tell how the educational concern was brought to your attention. Did you observe the problem or did someone inform you of the situation?
Therefore, I would like to ...	curiosity	Briefly state what you would like to do about the problem—what intervention would you like to try to see if the effect would be positive?
Points of interest regarding the concern/problem/issue, as presented in the literature, include:		You will likely add to and/or change this section throughout the process of finalizing the proposal—that is fine, at this point include what you know.
(a)		Provide a minimum of 3 points from the literature (cite references here and include the proper reference in a Reference section), which are related to your identified concern/problem. Also start what will be an appendix by annotating the sources.
(b)		Fill in the blanks as best you can—look for the one or two key studies that give you a good rationale for trying your solution.
(c)		
The research that clearly indicates that my solution to the identified problem should help resolve the problem is _____ (name of researchers?) work with _____ (population?)		
in which she/he _____ (did what?)		
and _____ (found what?).		

Q: why do people use templates?
tribe!

Cues and Guidance	
What will you do?	
What is your intent? This section needs to be as detailed as possible. The reader needs to be able to visualize exactly what you intend to do and what you intend the participants to do. Describe an intervention that has some kind of "action" in it to improve teaching or learning and be significant enough to have an impact.	<p>The following intervention is an attempt to _____ (improve/discover/change) by _____ (doing what?)</p>
Who will be involved...students or lecturers or others? What subjects and educational level(s)? Provide a description of the participants – include the way you will participate in the study.	(a) The intervention will be administered to ...
What technology, teaching strategy, instructional method, or resources do you intend to use to improve the situation?	(b) The selected method for the intervention will be ...
Do not include information in this section about any tests or instruments for gathering research data.)	(c) The learners in the study will be expected to ...
How do you plan to have the learners interact with the technology, teaching strategy, instructional method, or resources?	(d) The intervention is expected to extend over a _____ week period. Participants of the study will be involved in intervention _____ days each week. Each intervention session is expected to last _____ hours.
How long will the intervention take? If you really expect results, plan for a reasonable amount of time, following training, if needed.	Summary Purpose statement: The purpose of my research project is to _____ the _____ of _____ on _____ to _____ of _____
See Research Purpose Statement Guide on next page for possible word choices to fill in the blanks. If your purpose is to compare 2 different groups or treatments your purpose statement would be slightly different.	

Research Purpose Statement Guide

Writing the purpose statement for your research is a very important thing to do. It will guide everything else in the project. It might help to see a simplified formula for writing a purpose statement. Try picking one word from each column and see if you can build a clear purpose statement. The words listed below are not intended to be an exhaustive list. However, we think it is a good idea to write at least three different purpose statements for your research, and think about what would differ in each project because of differences in the purpose statement.

The purpose of my study is:

TO (pick 1 below)	THE (pick 1 below)	OF (pick or create)	ON (pick from below)	(pick from below)	OF (pick or create)
describe explain recount determine characterize measure portray examine discover	effects impact experience outcomes results learning experiences value relationship	collaborative planning one on one mentoring journaling calculator use Internet searches Spanish language counseling college newsletter recorded lectures & hands-on labs	administrators' students' lecturers' parents' participants' the public's colleagues' government officials' students'	perceptions achievement practices awareness belief use skills attitudes knowledge	faculty effectiveness Spanish grammar technology use education costs video game violence bilingual materials crisis management education funding biology
This column helps Inform your choice of methodology.	This column helps Inform your choice of methodology.	This column represents your independent variable (when appropriate).	This column represents your population.	This column helps Inform your choice of methodology.	This column, when combined with the column just to the left represents your dependent variable (when appropriate).

Examples:

1. The purpose of this study is to measure the effects of a virtual field trip on college student achievement of national biology standards/objectives concerning animal habitat.
2. The purpose of this study is to examine the learning experiences of college students as individuals and in cooperative groups as they experience a virtual field trip.

Notice that Example 1 has an independent and a dependent variable, and would be studied using primarily quantitative methods. Example 2 is a more descriptive study and, therefore, more qualitative measures should be used.

Now, explain how you plan to study whether and how your solution works or doesn't work.		Cues and Guidance
III: Evaluation of the Intervention		<i>How did it (what you did) work?</i>
A. Research Questions		<i>Note: In some situations you may have more than 3 research questions, but the concepts in the 3 below should be considered. You also may have research questions that compare 2 groups on learning outcomes, behaviors, and/or attitudes.</i> <i>Example: How does the use of light and temperature probes during first year science instruction influence science achievement?</i>
A research question that could address <u>learning outcomes</u> .		
RQ1:		
A research question that could address <u>behaviors or experiences</u> .		<i>Example: What are the experiences of biology students, when virtual labs are used for dissection instruction?</i>
RQ2:		
A research question that could relate to <u>beliefs or attitudes</u> .		<i>Example: How does the interaction with career counseling programs influence college students' beliefs about the importance of higher education?</i>
RQ3:		
B. Explanation of the Key Terms and Concepts		<i>If you have true independent and dependent variables you address those here. Otherwise define terms and concepts. Identify the variables and write 1-2 sentences to describe each of them as they relate to the research study. References may be needed if you refer to variables or terms like constructive teaching method, internal motivation, success.</i> <i>List them in order that they relate to the research questions. Write as definitions. Example: A term that is important to measuring a learning outcome would be "Science achievement" refers to student acquisition of content knowledge and skills as measured by the difference in student pretest and posttest scores from a teacher-made science test and on student scores from a teacher-made science rubric."</i>
The variables of / terms important to/ concepts that are key to _____ (fill in with a variable/concept) in the research study include:		
a) b) c)		
C. Negotiations to be Taken:		<i>Identify any negotiations, which will need to be done before implementing your research. Include the people with whom the negotiations will need to be made. Write this section in future tense.</i>
D. Resources Needed:		<i>A brief description of the resources (money, materials, time, space, equipment, etc.) and the amount/number of those resources are provided.</i>

IV. Data Collection Methods: The following chart would organize your research questions, data collection techniques, and rationales for the use of those techniques. Typically, at least two instruments are used to gather data for addressing each research question. By using two instruments for each research question, you can triangulate your data. Information in chart is an example.

Research Question 1	Data Collection Technique			Rationale
How does the use of light and temperature probes during 1 st year college science instruction influence science achievement?	Before Intervention	During Intervention	After Intervention	The instructor-made tests and rubrics are appropriate instruments for measuring the acquisition of content knowledge and skills. Numerical values can be derived from the use of both instruments to measure student learning. In addition, the rubric will provide narrative information about the specific skills acquired.
	Instructor-made pretest on light and heat concepts	Instructor-made rubric for measuring science process skills regarding the use of light and heat probes	Instructor-made posttest on light and heat concepts	

Research Question 2	Data Collection Technique			Rationale
What are the lab experiences of teachers and students when using probe equipment individually and in groups?	Before Intervention	During Intervention	After Intervention	

Research Question 3	Data Collection Technique			Rationale
Do instructors believe the investment in probe equipment justifies the cost, in resources, time, and training?	Before Intervention	During Intervention	After Intervention	

V. The rest of your Research Proposal would include a more detailed description of your data collection and analysis methods, and, in the appendices, an annotated bibliography, copies of your instruments (tests, surveys, interview protocols, etc.), and permission forms (consent forms, permission to conduct research from institution, statement of human subject protection, etc.)